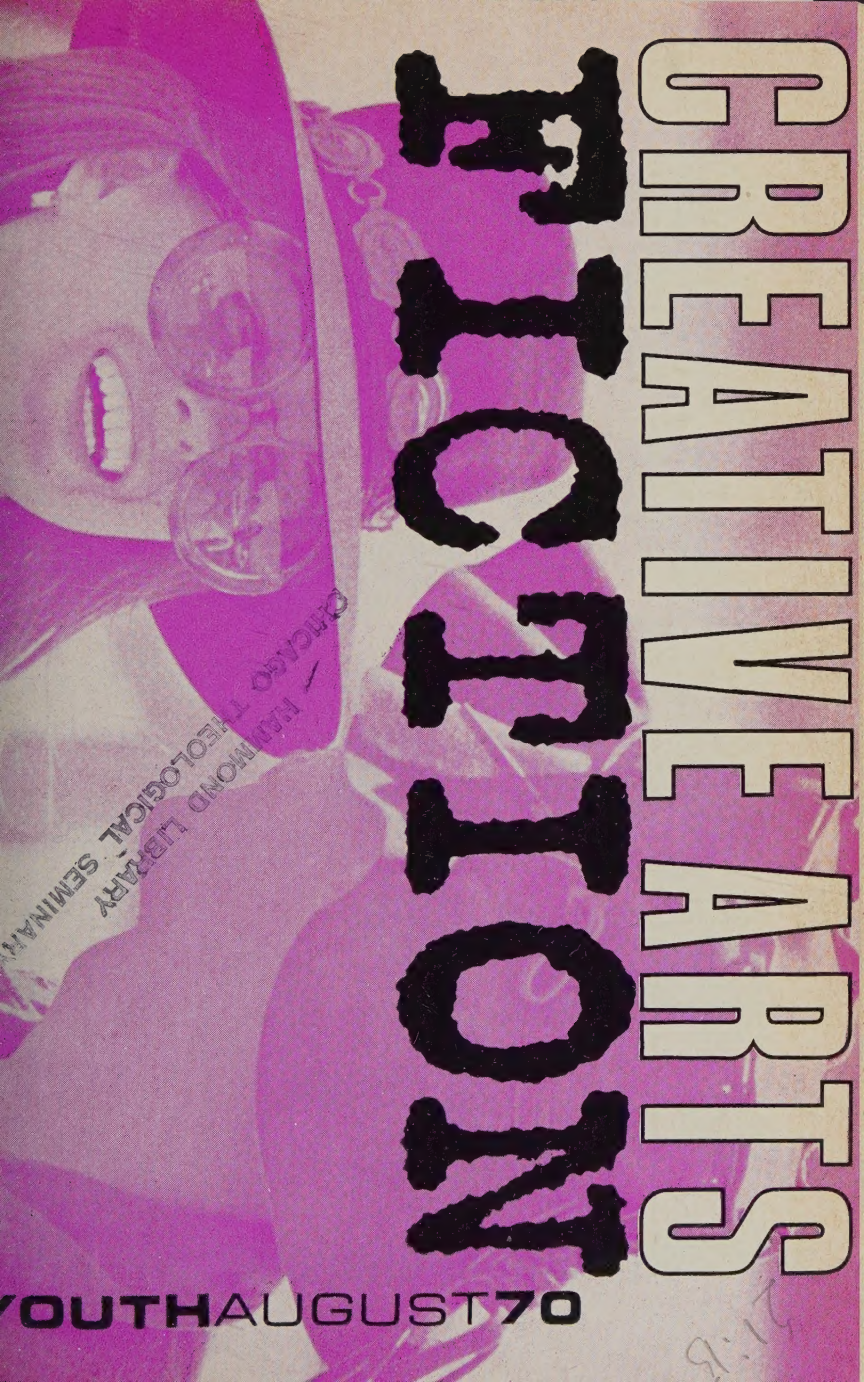


CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL

YOUTH AUGUST 70



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Youth

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of the

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and

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fiction/ 'fik-shən/ n (ME *ficcious*, fr. MF *fictio*, fr. L. *fictio*-*fictio* act of fashioning, fiction, fr. *fictus*, pp of fingere to shape, fashion, feign—more at DOUGH) 1a: something invented by the imagination or feigned; specif: an invented story b: fictitious literature (as novels or short stories) 2: an assumption of a possibility as a fact irrespective of the question of its truth 3: the action of feigning or of creating with the imagination—*fic-tion-al*/ -shən, -shən'l/adj. *fic-tion-al-ly* adv.

The above is fiction, according to Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary. What follows in these pages is fiction, according to the judges of our 1970 Creative Arts Competition who picked these stories from among the several hundred submitted by you, our readers, to YOUTH magazine. In addition to fiction, you will find in this copy of YOUTH some non-fictional prose which our judges also felt to be of "winning" quality.

This issue contains only prose writing. In the months ahead, we will publish two more Creative Arts issues, one containing the best of the poetry entries, the other the best in art,

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Ed Eckstein



I can still remember the day I followed Horace Hollingsworth's hairy old black and white-spotted dog around the neighborhood. I bet we stopped at nine trees, four bushes, two mailboxes, and one lamp post. At least, that's as many as I could count because I was only five. Not only that, but I was bare-footed and had to watch out for sharp stones and glass on the road.

Pretty soon I lost sight of that darn dog, so I stopped to bust open tar bubbles with my big toe. It was real hot and sticky and that road was as bumpy as the moles on Mrs. Rothelberger's back. Mrs. Rothelberger always mowed her yard in a yellow midi-blouse, bright red shorts and high heels with her hose rolled down around the ankles. So I got to know her moles pretty good. When I got enough glop on my toe, I smeared

pulled grass and dandelions and junk and stuck it on. It looked real keen.

Just then, I looked up and saw good old Walter Woodrow Whippinger III playing in his tractor tire sandbox. You remember Walter. He was almost the first kid in our neighborhood to be Catholic and in the first grade all at the same time. Anyway, I figured he'd forgotten that I was Geraldine Louise Gaberdiel from two streets over, since I hadn't seen him for a while. Rachel (that's my mom) said that Walter had been real bad sick with the chickenpox. I swore right then and there no chicken was ever gonna pock me!

I walked on over to the tractor tire and said "Haah" real sweet like Aunt Agnes from Arkansas. If Walter had forgotten me, I wanted him to think I was still sweet and friendly.



In my experience with creative expression, I've discovered one very helpful recipe. To serve a mouth-watering dish to your guests be sure to add one cup of enriched imagination, one tbsp. of quick-cooking originality, a pinch of humanness, a good measure of YOURSELF, and blend slowly. "Sandbox Revisited" is a conglomerate of both real and imaginary ingredients from my childhood. Promise me one thing. If someday you see Geraldine outside your door, take off your shoes and socks, run outside and "bust" open tar bubbles with her. She'd like that!

—Kurt Van Meter/17/Cridersville, O.

still not sure if it was the way I said "Haah" or the bathing suit I was wearing. It was a pink bikini with two tulips where a girl ought to have tulips. One of my straps had fallen down and part of my chest was *showing*! Now I was sure I was gonna be one of those girls with a repetition!!!

Walter didn't say anything though. He just packed his sand pail, dumped it upside down, and made sort of a tunnel through it.

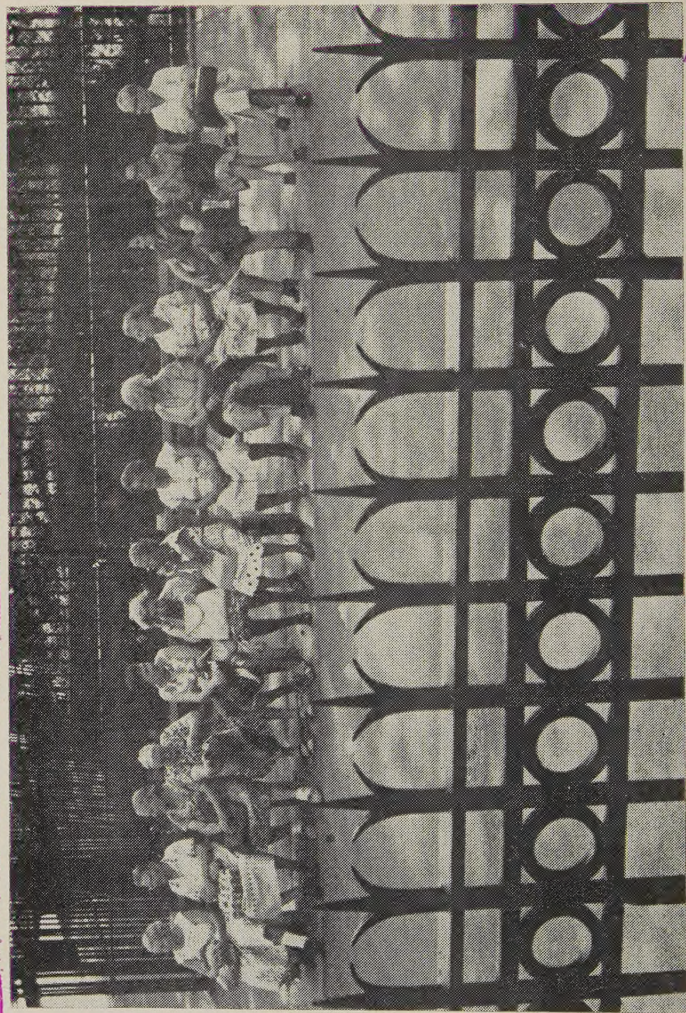
I filled the sand pail too and told Walter I was making a chocolate cake for 'us.' When I turned it over there were kooky lumps all through it. Walter said it was maybe because his cat did a lot of you know what and buried it. That's a pretty rotten trick if you ask me.

Pretty soon Walter's mother called him and said it was time to practice his violin. Gosh, Walter was a magician or whatever

Rachel called it. I was sure I was in love. Imagine, Walter played the violin. Ahh, how rheumatic.

Walter told me I'd have to go now because it was his cat dirt and his sand and his tractor tire. So I said "Good-bah," rearranged my tulips, and started off home.





As I moved slowly up the metal staircase, I heard the echo of my shoes in the hollow cold hall. Reaching a large gray metal door, I knew I was on the second floor. In shifting my purse and package into my left arm, I caught a glimpse of the drab brown walls surrounding me. I pulled the heavy gray door open and entered a noisy and confused world.

Strolling down the hall on my right, I thought that this old folks' home was more like the confusion of a disorganized kindergarten class. Many aged people were crawling about. Two old withered men pushed themselves in wheelchairs. Suddenly a withered and sheet-white old woman ran up to me.

"Oh, Joyce! Honey, you've finally come to see me!" she faintly squealed, tugging on the

Gazing at the ugly woman I replied, "My name is Sally Lill, not Joyce. I'm sorry."

From nowhere a nurse appeared and said, "Excuse us." She put her right arm around the old thin lady and walked her to a room across the hall.

I continued down the dimly lit hall. I couldn't decide if the walls were painted beige or yellow. The few almost powerless light bulbs cast little light and I felt as if I were a captive in a dungeon. Just in front of me a nurse with a gray food tray entered a room. Reaching the room, I noticed that the door was not closed all the way. I peered in and the sickiest odors hit me. I smelled vomit, ointments, and mustiness. A sick old man sat in his bed with a food tray full of food in front of him. The nurse stood beside him and screamed, "Eat!" The old man



Creative writing is the recreating of a familiar experience. You may use your imagination (as I did for parts of this story, "Number 42"). However, in the end you must have a piece of work which is highly realistic.

—Bette L. Wickman/16/Sturgeon Bay, Wis.

took her hands from her hips and bent to feed him. She picked up something with a fork and put it up to his mouth. Tediously the old man turned his head. Now I could see his whole face. His eyes were red shades that sat on a white wrinkled and homely background. His pale mouth fell open revealing yellow dentures. His face was as untidy as his room. I knew he hadn't shaved for days. His face was scattered with whiskers that glittered in the sunlight from the only window near the head of the bed. The nurse again thrust the fork toward his mouth. He only turned farther away. I turned my eyes from the man and looked about at the furniture. How plain and drab, I thought. Quickly the nurse had set the fork down with a clang and I glanced back. Blood was pouring from the old man's mouth.

slowly walked on. All the doors were closed now and the halls were empty except for two men pushing themselves in squeaky wheelchairs. I came upon a small art gallery. I thought that this must be the highlight of the whole institution. Two light bulbs shone upon the framed ancient paintings. I blankly looked at them. One painting had a dark background and in the glass I saw my own face reflected. I looked closer and saw that there were wrinkles around my eyes and mouth, and on my forehead some-how the wrinkles were emphasized in the murky reflection. "Oh, can that be me?" I whispered. A nurse touched my shoulder and jolted me out of my thoughts. Her black and dense eyebrows rose when she asked, "Miss Lill?"

"Yes," I reassured her.

"Please follow me. Your room

THE MISTAKE

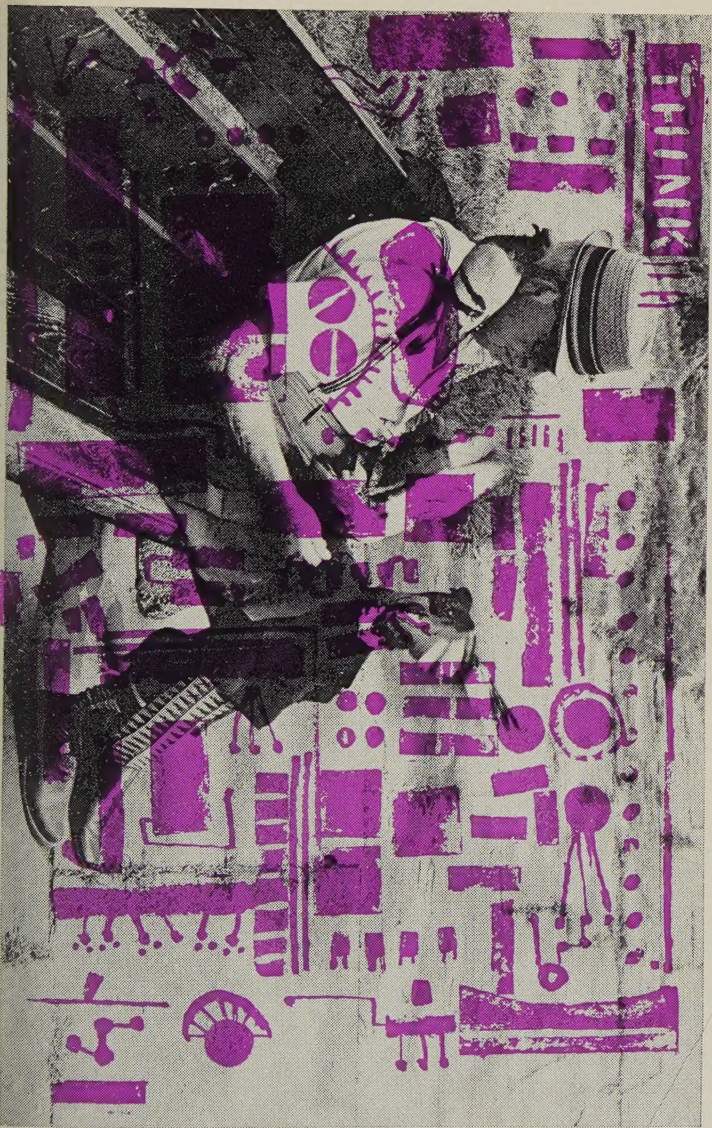


Photo by George Creed

Monday morning dawned for Mr. Harry Walten Clearwater-Jones #753901. Since his wife had died a month before, he observed a regular schedule: up at 8:30, 20 minutes of calisthenics, shower, shave, and breakfast on synthetic bacon and eggs alternating with the vitamin-enriched protein called cereal. On this particular morning he had real bread, a delicacy these days. After eating he went out to get the mail as always.

The morning post contained the usual newspaper (no use reading it—it always said the government had things under control and everything was rosy), bills in the pink envelopes, advertisements in the yellow, personal mail in the blue. This morning, however, there was a green envelope, too. Harry Clearwater-Jones shivered involuntarily. Only twice before

when his mother passed on, the last time only a few weeks ago when his wife had died. The rest of the mail dropped to the floor. Harry ripped and tore at the envelope. "Be calm," he thought, but still his hands trembled in fear of what they would find. Finally it was open. His heart stopped as if forever as he stared incredulously at the slip of paper. It was a death certificate. His!

Harry didn't know what to think. He slumped down in a nearby chair, his whole body limp. Again he looked at the paper as though his eyes had played tricks on him the first time. He read:

Concerning: Harry Walten
Clearwater-Jones #753901
State of Being: Deceased
As of: April 19, 2236 A.D.
Cause: Natural
By: Program Computer # 53
State Computer Office



I find that writing is a handy vent for your ideas and emotions. Often it is easier to express your philosophies and ideals in stories and poems than by speech. "The Mistake" was created solely for fun—a "what if?" story. However, it ended up to be more realistic than I planned (or cared to admit). Perhaps the greatest fear in my life is that our society will turn out to be as impersonal and unfeeling as the one in my story.
—Mary Norton/15/Inwood, Ind.

What should he do? He was still alive, wasn't he? He touched his face so as to be sure. Suddenly he knew what to do. He must inform them of their mistake. He took one last glance at the paper, put it in his pocket and walked out the front door without even bothering to close it behind him.

He went straight to the State Computer Office where he confronted the first person he saw. In fact, it was the only person.

"Excuse me, ma'am," said Harry. "Do you work here?"

"Yes, sir. May I help you?"

"I hope so," said Harry, at a loss for words. "I would like to report a mistake."

"A mistake?" asked the girl. "Oh, no. You must be mistaken. Our computers do not make errors." She put her hand on one of the mechanical monstrosities, almost affectionately, Harry

"Oh, I'm afraid one of them did. Number 53 to be exact."

"What do you mean?" asked the girl looking like a mother who had been informed that her little angel of a child had just beaten up the boy next door.

"But I'm sure it did," said Harry. "Here it is. This little slip of paper says, 'I, Harry Walten Clearwater-Jones #753901, am dead.' I am not dead. That is a mistake."

The girl stared unbelievably at the paper. "When did you receive this?" she asked.

"This morning in the early mail," he said. "It is a mistake, isn't it?"

"It can't be. I mean the computers can't make mistakes. We haven't had a mistake here in years."

"But it is an error. I am not dead. Just what do you plan to

"Why—I don't know. I just don't know. I should report it to the district manager, I suppose," said the girl. "If you will wait here, please. It will probably be a while."

"Quite all right," said Harry. "I am in no hurry." The girl walked away as if in shock.

Harry could not sit down. Not only was he too nervous, but there was no chair. He wandered down the aisles between the myriads of computers. Suddenly he noticed they were numbered. He started looking for 53. Finally, he found it.

At first he just stood there and stared at it, unable to believe that anything that looked so harmless could do such a thing. It had, in effect, tried to kill him. "Why, why would you want to do such a thing," Harry thought.

"Why did I wish to do what?"

Harry was so startled that he actually jumped. Evidently he had inadvertently voiced his last thought. "Why did you send me a notice telling me I was dead?" Harry finally answered.

"Because you are dead," replied the computer.

"How can I be dead if I am standing here talking to you?" retorted Harry.

The machine emitted a stream of beeps, buzzes, and various other noises. "Unknown," it replied.

"Obviously you made a mistake," said Harry impatiently.

"That is impossible," said the mechanical voice. Harry shuddered to think how human it sounded.

"Well, you had to," said Harry, getting angry. "I am not dead."

The computer let out some more ghastly noises. Then the voice again, "You are right."

as he leaned against the mass of circuits called a machine.

"The error, of course, must be corrected," the computer concluded.

"You're darned right it must be corrected," said Harry, feeling infinitely superior. "That's what I am here for. You can't have a man walking around who is supposed to be dead."

"You wish the error corrected immediately?" queried the computer.

"As fast as possible," replied Harry. He was finally getting something done.

With its orders laid in, the machine computed the fastest way to comply. It did not take long. Slowly but surely it set its circuits into action. Suddenly a giant surge of electrical power passed through the panel Harry was leaning against. He died instantly.

had learned that it would take months to cut the red tape. Then they would destroy computer number 53. That was what hurt her most. These machines were like her own family. It was like killing her own child. She came out but could not find Mr. Clearwater-Jones anywhere. Then she caught sight of him sprawled across the aisle. At first she did not comprehend, but then she saw the blackened circuits and she knew. "It is just as well," she thought. What was the use of disrupting all these years of peace for one miniscule mistake. After all, he was old and would have died sooner or later. Well, what was more important, billions of dollars of machines that she loved or one miserable old man who was supposed to be dead anyway?

As she turned to go, a rhyme she had learned long ago popped

Stories and records must be
kept.

This man alone can't do.

So now we have a new
machine

That does it all for you.

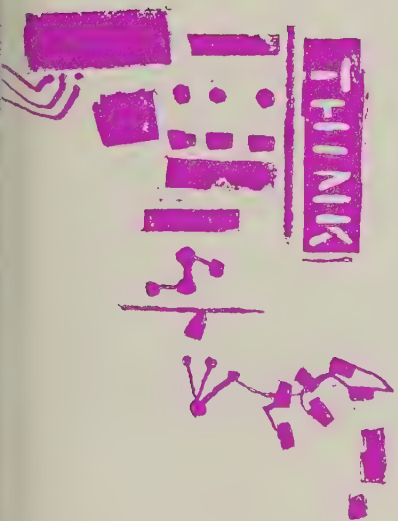
It has been proven without a
doubt

A computer never fails.

All men must die eventually

And dead men tell no tales.

She turned, looked at Mr.
Harry Walten Clearwater-Jones
#753901, felt no regret, and re-
turned to her desk, marvelling at
the progress mankind had made
through the years—making such
efficient machines that could han-
dle virtually any situation in the
fastest, most logical way with ab-
solutely no feeling of compunction
or remorse. Would that mankind
itself could reach such a height
of grandeur and perfection.





A boy of 19 stood with his face to the sun, his hands pushed deep into his checked pants pockets, the puffed sleeves of his shirt rippling in the wind.

His hair, resting on his shoulders, fell across a face painted with 19 years of hurt and anger. His shoulders, monuments of defiance, were slumped with the weight of a heavy decision. In his eyes burned the worry of a 40-year-old man and the hands within his pocket trembled.

He looked down at the faded bellbottom pants he wore, the high dusty brown boots and the bright beads about his neck. He then knelt down, slowly drawing his hands from the prison of his pockets, and touched the grass that grew at his feet. He thought for a moment about his family, his mother and father watching from the window, wondering where

something was wrong yet not understanding it all, and the dog he had trained and raised from a pup, all waiting for someone who wasn't coming home.

Rising he drew himself up to his full height once more, feet planted firmly on the ground, hands clenched at his sides, face hardened by reality and tears burning on his cheeks. He exhaled from his wallet a slip of paper. Gazing at it, he knew what tearing up this paper would mean; he knew what he would have to give up, but he hesitated only a moment, and the paper, torn and crumbled beneath his beliefs, fell upon the ground and blew away. He took one more look, just one, and turned his back on his family, on his friends, on his country and stepped into Canada never to return because he believed in the commandment, "Thou shalt not



I wrote "Number 6" because I felt there must be something drastically wrong in a country that forces men to run to Canada, because they do not wish to take another man's life. I wrote it to make people see, and perhaps, try to do something about it.

—Jeannette Horth/17/Coventry, Conn.

Photo by Roha Eng

DESTINY

ESTINY BY KATHY WALLEISA

I distinctly remember the day he left. It was a beautiful morning. A more perfect day could not have been planned, except for the heat. It was the height of summer and extremely hot for so early in the morning. For a change, there came a slight breeze now and then, compensating for the oppressive heat and humidity.

Always the nature lover, he stopped to admire the beauty around him and commented on the stillness and inactivity which is, of course, how it should have been at five o'clock in the morning. I am sure that at this particular moment, the beauty of my surroundings had to be one of the last things on my mind. His detachment from grave problems at hand never ceased to amaze me. It was as though anything that he did not care to believe or ac-

I remember thinking, as we drove him to the station, that something like this just could not be happening to us. I remember how he was laughing and joking with everyone—maybe it was just a camouflage to hide his real emotions. I don't really know. He was the only dry-eyed person there. He told us not to worry; he would be back soon. Then, waving his cap from the train platform, he left.

He wrote as often as he could and told us what a good time he was having. He told us about all the new people he was meeting and about all the new places he was getting to see. He made it sound like a vacation. I remember one letter when he told us about a great beach he had found. The water was just the temperature he liked and it never got crowded at all.


Everytime a letter was a little

late in coming, I would think the worst. I had always been a pessimist. But he made it back, just like he said he would. Only this time he wasn't laughing and joking. In fact, he was rather quiet. I tried very hard not to cry because I knew how much he hated women that cried all the time. Actually, he disliked any display of emotion, especially over him. But when I saw him lying there in that coffin, looking so young and innocent, I cried. He was too young to die. He had the best part of his life yet to live. He was only 18.



I write to express ideas that perhaps I wouldn't be able to get across just by speaking to someone. Also, when I am depressed, it is a help to me to write about the things that are bothering me. ("Destiny")
—Kathy Walleisa/18/Lansdale, Pa.



 I read in the paper where a man, whose profession and credentials have since slipped my mind, stated that if all the people of the world imbibed 10% more vitamin C they would be able to think 10% more clearly. Imagine what a difference that would create in world affairs!

It makes you stop and think. At least if you have nothing better to occupy your mind (provided you have one, which, by the way, is becoming a rarity!) with the topic of citrus fruit.

Pick a year, any year! Let's take 1968. The president: Lyndon Baines Johnson. The world scene: Dismal. The home front: No bed of roses either. For a mercifully brief look at what was occurring: JANUARY: Savage assaults in South Vietnam, two military aides assassinated in Guatemala, North Korea seizes the intelligence ship, "Pueblo," North Vietnamese

New Year Truce. APRIL: saw Martin Luther King assassinated and the Columbia University takeover. JUNE: bore witness to the shooting of Senator Robert F. Kennedy. AUGUST: was busy, busy, busy with the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, France's first hydrogen bomb explosion, chaos in Chicago and trouble in Guatemala again with the brutal slaying of U.S. ambassador John Gordon Mein. OCTOBER: was grace with two coup d'etats; a Communist rocket attack on Saigon and a battle in Mexico between students and the Mexican Army. As we limped into DECEMBER: we had our hands full keeping Israel and the U.A.R. from each others' throats and what a feeling of security when we were told of Communist China's first nuclear bomb detonation. To leave things as they are is not at



The problems that face our world today are problems that will not be solved entirely by governmental effort, but rather by individual understanding, trust, and logical treatment of crises as they arise. It is my feeling that the youth must build upon what they have, not destroy, and they must stand united with logic determining their decisions rather than letting themselves be led by in-experienced, emotionally oriented forces. Patience must be nurtured, and all things taken into consideration, we cannot help but to better ourselves and our world.

—Jackie Hampton/17/Ventura, Cal.

straight. There were many, many good and wonderful things that happened in this year I have made so ugly. I have a point to make. But on to oranges! If what the above-mentioned, unidentified man states holds true, marvelous things could be achieved. Maybe if we made all the delegates to the Vietnam Peace Conference drink orange juice instead of water we wouldn't have wasted all that time arguing about what shape the table was going to be! And don't you suppose that if oranges grew well in Russia she might never have put her thumb on Czechoslovakia? Are assassins allergic to citrus fruit? Surely there is some food for thought there! And maybe if Arabs grew lemons instead of date palms and Israelis built a thriving industry around limes they wouldn't go around hijacking planes and sabotaging

der if the governments of South America would become more stable if they stopped exporting all that fruit and started eating some of it!

This thing has enormous possibilities. You are aware I'm sure, that in courtrooms, United Nations meetings, summit conferences between world leaders and even at high school debates there is the ever present glass and pitcher of water. Suppose, just suppose, that someone went around and dumped all that H_2O and replaced it with OJ. Would judges be more clear on sentences they were handing out and would people stop worrying about seating arrangements and table shapes? Wouldn't it be a surprise the next time someone asked for foreign aid if instead of forking over a few billion dollars we sent them a year's supply of citrus

foreign aid? You may laugh and hesitate at the logic of the whole idea but after all, isn't it traditional for a bride to carry orange blossoms? How many orange blossom marriages have you seen on the rocks, hmmm?

So the next time someone offers you an orange—don't make a face. Remember that you will be the next generation to inherit the world, AND its problems. Think citrus. If we can cover the whole world with orange juice we'll be sticky and gooey and hopefully 10% smarter. And that 10% can go a long way.

Orange ya glad I told ya all about it?

AMERICANISM



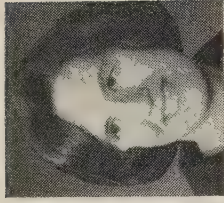
by Lana Reeves (Bethel)

Americanism is a lively little creature who resides either deep in the murky recesses of my heart or in the rush-hour thoroughfares of my mind, depending upon the situation and the company. This resident animal has the power to inhibit, emancipate, elevate, or deflate my spirit, according to its whim. Oddly enough, medical science is unable to rid me of this affliction—only through its own self-destruction will I be free—only Americanism can kill Americanism.

Americanism has the power to keep me in a state of mental turmoil because of its constant self-contradiction. It can afford me the longest life expectancy of any citizenship on this planet—if its anti-riot guns, wars, or cholesterol do not kill me first. It offers the most beautiful scenery available, but breathing while watching this

scenery can be fatal. It dictates that I must build "walls" around my personality and feelings in order to survive its society, but causes my eyes to water when I hear the Pledge of Allegiance, "Hail to the Chief," or the national anthem. I have seen Americanism sacrifice its own champions, yet this self-immolation does not deter others caught in its deadly spell.

If only subconsciously, the Americanism animal controls my very life. It would never allow me to burn a flag, harvest Cuban sugar cane, champion a leftist cause or expatriate myself. Yet this same creature forces me to abhor the so-called "conflict" in Vietnam, and the conditions in which poverty-stricken individuals live—here in the United States of America, God forgive us! Americanism means that I can write on



I believe that creative expression is one of the most wonderful and dangerous means of communication that we, as human beings, have. The wonder is in the new horizons which we open to each other through this medium; the danger lies in the paradox of interpretation. It is only right that each should decide for himself his interpretation of another's creative expression—but the threat of misconstruing the creator's intent is always present. Misconception can limit or destroy completely the horizons offered by creative expression. This essay does not contain my complete conception of the idea of "Americanism;" A conception **can not** be **totally** communicated. I would hope that this essay would not be interpreted as "flag waving," but merely as my interpretation and communication of a many-faceted word.

this paper "Richard Nixon is unfit to be President." This does not happen to be my belief, but I have established my right to criticize the chief executive of the United States government; no "bogyman" will come to burn me with cigarettes, cut off my hand, or ship me to the Yukon.

In my Americanism, I feel that I may criticize the United States government, citizens and bureaucratic practices; however, I could not stand to hear an alien do the same thing.

Even though this lively creature named Americanism threatens, dominates, and undermines my life, I do not wish to be rid of it. Should it die, or be taken away, the vacancy left in my body and soul would be permanent; but, keeping it alive and effective is a constant battle. The struggle is tiring but the end of the battle

would be the end of my Americanism, which in turn would forever deprive me of a whole and fulfilled personality and soul.



by Ed Eckstein

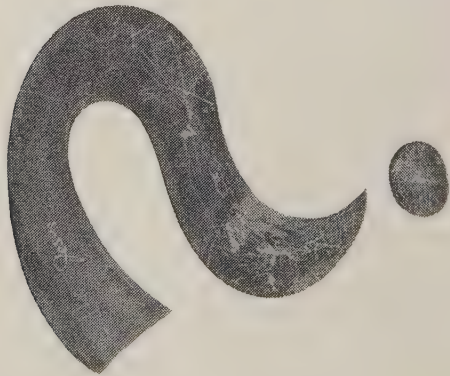
DEAR GOD,

PLEASE are you listening? . . . i hope so this time now, which mail-box am i supposed to mail this in? you see GOD, i've got a problem . . . it goes something like this. i'm alone, and, well i don't know how to be happy anymore. it started a while ago and everyone said, "keep the faith & live". so i prayed and prayed and asked for YOUR help. well that's why i'm writing YOU now, 'cause i didn't get an answer . . .

last week i was told "before you set down to pray, GOD knows already what you need . . so just pray 'our father'." well i tried that but it didn't seem to work, 'cause i'm still alone. now i'm telling YOU straight what i need, because i think YOU forgot . . . "i need love" that's all i'm asking for!!!

GOD please don't forget

NE BY KAREN LEE ROBERTS



ALONE

I came upon writing "alone. . . ." one evening when I asked myself "if God is so alive, why does he make lonely people as myself?" My mind seems to be full of questions, but loneliness seems to top the list. The reason, WHY? —Karen Lee Roberts/15/Newtown, Conn.

THE REJECT



y Nancy Haines

I'll never forget the day when "Old Toad" came limping into the classroom. It had been a normal day, I guess, with the usual pre-class babble of voices. Everyone was turned around talking to his neighbor, and I was talking to the boy behind me. Suddenly he started and stared fixedly at the door. One by one the heads swiveled around to gawk. Turning around, I got my first look at "Old Toad." He came limping into the classroom; not a regular limp but an up and down motion, the remnant of an accident long ago. But his face! Nothing could compare to that. It looked normal enough, but every three seconds or so it would twitch: this produced an awful mouth stretching effect, which made him look akin to a toad. Occasionally he would glare at an offending student who was

out to such a degree that he would look like the "Toad of Toad Hall" in "The Wind in the Willows."

He was rather pitiful to see; one could imagine the trouble he had getting through life. When you first saw him, his face had the tendency to make you laugh. Perhaps it was a laugh of nervousness or of relief that you weren't made the same way. People had probably been staring or laughing at him his whole life. He was no sissy, though, and could take care of himself. During his first geography class, the class was talking and laughing at him. The name of "Old Toad" had already been coined. The guy behind me laughed out loud. "Old Toad" glared at him and I have already told you of the effect that this produced. It was all the pupil could do to keep from laughing



Often, because a teacher has an unusual appearance or trait, he is the object of insults and ridicule from the students. They forget that the teacher, too, is human and has feelings. In my story I have tried to show that fun for one person may be misery for the other. After having read "The Reject" I hope that any student with such a teacher will be inclined to make friends with and not taunt that teacher.

—Marsha King/16/Beloil, Quebec

strangled gasp escaped. With a pounce "Old Toad" was on him, and gave him a couple of solid punches.

No one smiled in "Old Toad's" class again. In fact, we were afraid of him, and the girls cringed every time he looked at them. It was a sort of armed peace, with us keeping our guard up and him trying to break it down. He never budged a smile, but with a face like his I didn't blame him. Then he had nothing to smile about either. We treated him pretty badly, too: always snickering or staring impolitely. For days I tried to glimpse a humanlike quality in him but he remained a complete and total stranger. No one knew where he came from or who he really was.

One day he came in looking excited. What I mean by looking excited is that his face twitched

it didn't get tired. But he didn't notice it and after a while we didn't either. All day we waited to hear what he was so excited about and in geography class he finally told us, the first thing he had ever told us about himself. He said he was interested in the wind currents of the earth. He was going to send several hydrogen filled balloons aloft and hope that someone would write to him saying that they found one. He had even made out several little cards, each with his name and address on it, which he was going to tie to the balloons. When the class heard this a few hoots of laughter went up, but "Old Toad" was so excited that I don't think he heard them at all. If he was happy, then I was happy for him. It was also the first time that anybody had seen him smile. Now that was progress.

balloons was set for a Tuesday, and "Old Toad" seemed pretty happy about the whole affair. Often I saw him limping down the hall and humming away to himself. But the aura of happiness which surrounded him did not enter into the classroom; it stayed out in the hall. As soon as he entered into the classroom he became his old self, glaring around the room as if he were challenging someone to laugh. No one dared, not after the episode on the first day. He did not invite us to see him release the balloons, but since he was doing it after school we would see it anyway. It was as if he thought the presence of an unbeliever would tarnish the great occasion. We were all skeptical that anything would happen, and I felt sorry for "Old Toad" in that he was building himself up for a let-down. It was then that the idea

What if he did get an answer, after all? Delighted at my genius, I asked everyone in the class if they had any penpals, and hit the jackpot. One boy had one in Australia, but when I told him of my plan to help "Old Toad" he gave me a puzzled look and walked away. I don't know why I wanted to help him, for he was mean, but I think it was a kind of sad meanness to make people think that he was tough and to make up for his face twitch.

The balloons went up in a kaleidoscope of color, and underneath them an old man with the face of a toad looked up, hoping that his project would work. When they had become too small to see, he turned and limped away to a delapidated Volkswagen, got in, and rattled out of the parking lot towards home. In these days a teacher wasn't paid much, espe-

bigger schools got the good teachers, while the rejects were shuffled off to the smaller ones. "Old Toad" had probably been sent from school to school, until he got to ours; and I was willing to bet a dollar to a donut that next year he would be gone, to a smaller school elsewhere.

In one way the project helped us, for I saw "Old Toad" smile several times. He was definitely becoming friendlier with the students. Secretly I wondered what would happen if "Old Toad" did not get an answer. That was in the future, though, so I didn't worry about it.

Little did I realize all the trouble that my idea would make. If I had known, I would not have opened my big mouth and asked if we could find someone to write to "Old Toad" saying that he had found one of his balloons. He did

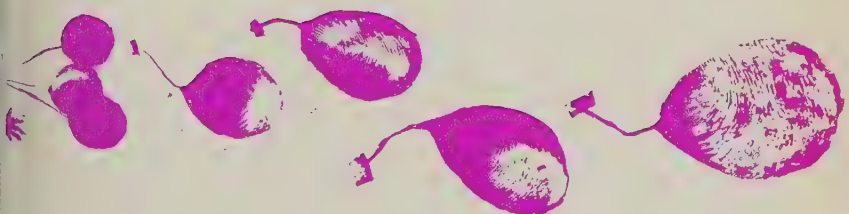
in Australia wrote saying that he had found a balloon by his house. We were stunned; Australia was several thousand miles away. Then I remembered about my friend's penpal, but I didn't say anything at the time. After all, two weeks had passed and that was probably ample time for the balloon to have reached Australia.

The trouble started when Old Toad" took the letter to a meteorological society in town. They told him flatly that for the balloon to have traveled that distance in one week, allowing one week for the letter to return, was impossible. Then, to add insult to injury, they told him not to bother them again. "Old Toad" stood up for himself, of course, and told them that he would write to the man in Australia and ask him to send his card back to him. This would prove beyond a doubt that he

put his small group of belongings into his tattered schoolbag, straightened his threadbare jacket, and limped out of the classroom. Looking out of the window, I saw him get into his delapidated Volkswagen, drive out of the parking lot, over the hill and out of view. That was the last I ever saw of "Old Toad."

Two weeks later he got his letter back with "party not known" stamped on it. I'll never forget his face when a teacher handed him the letter: it twitched and he looked up and fixed us with a sad glare as if he couldn't understand who would want to play such a mean trick on him. He put the letter in the pocket of his threadbare jacket and limped slowly out of the classroom. We avoided him for the rest of the week, and I felt terrible about the whole thing. Someone had made him look like a fool.

Well, the year progressed and finished in a mediocre way, like every other school year I've had. "Old Toad" retreated into himself and never cracked another smile or even spoke to us for that matter. He was his old self again, just like at the beginning of the year. Then on the last day of



WINNING



Photo by C. N. Newton

Summer again. Good. Sunday too. What could be better? No rain. Perfect. At 6:30 on a Sunday morning the world is quiet and serene. And if you happen to have a "thing" for motorcycle racing like I do, you can taste the anticipation of the afternoon's race well in advance. Final preparation were made last night. The rings were checked the air filter inspected and the oil changed. Now all that remains is getting the bikes loaded on the truck and the extra gear secured. And then the journey: the awful drive to the track that happens to be on the schedule this Sunday. The mood is one of anticipation and fear. The anticipation dominates the conversation. This is very evident. We talk about this one or that one and will so and so be there. "Sure hope so," I say. "It will make it more of a contest." Then the fear speaks,

but silently. It makes itself known by the rumble in my stomach and sweat on my hands. I know I'm not the only one either. We all know...

9:30 A.M. We have left the main highway about 15 minutes ago and are following a gravel road leading to the track. Finally we see the gate. A sign says "\$1.00 donation to watch or ride." We slow down and stop. I reach in my pocket and pull out a dollar. The price of blood.

Onward, onward: must not waste time. We park the truck. I get out and stretch my body. My muscles are so taut that I wonder when some one will trip the catch and release the spring.

Looking around, I begin to spot familiar faces. From where I'm standing I can see about 15 machines and riders that I know and have raced against before. I also see quite a few familiar

faces without names. By the end of the summer I'll know them well. I think of the first day I went to a riders' meeting. The official said, "Look to the right of you, look to the left of you. Chances are tomorrow that one of them won't be here. If you don't drive carefully, you may come home in a basket, son!" Boy, that really shook me. I was ready to go out there and show them all. Now I'm a little older (two years) and a lot wiser. The official still gives the same speech and I still listen, but it doesn't bother me as much now. But as I said before, I still listen.

10:45 A.M. I'm on the bike in full dress regalia. We have until 12:30 to practice and get the feel of the track. I have found out by this time that there are 13 riders in my class. That means we'll have to have two heats to determine the finalists. The first three in each heat will

make it. That's my first sweat. Finish in the top three in the heat. I know I have to go out there and really pour it on, but yet I don't want to spend my bike before the final. What the hell to do? But that's silly. I know very well what to do. I should. I've been doing it every Sunday all summer long for two and a half years now.

Down on the track. The power of the bikes always awes me. Today there is a lot of good competition here; five Harley-Davidsons, three Bultacos, two BSA's, one Huskavara, one Triumph, and me on my lonely bull—I mean Benelli. My hands and feet are racing furiously. It seems to be a nervous habit of mine. I'm always gunning the throttle or kicking the foot peg.

Okay, okay, let's get the show on the road. All this waiting and

of my guts. I ride in the 125 cc class. That means we're second on the program. Man, I'm sure glad I don't ride one of those big 750 cc jobs. I'd never be able to wait that long. That's their tough luck though, not mine. I have enough of my own.

The starter is in place with the white flag. This is one thing I think is really great about sanctioned racing. The safety factor is "numero uno." Even in practice. Not like on a public highway. There, they're out to get you.

Well, the practice is over. I feel so great I'm ready to explode. The weather is fine. A slight breeze to cool the hot air. The track is hard and fast. Really fast. I have dust in my nose, in my mouth, in my eyes, and murder in my heart and my guts. The bike has it today. I know. It is so ready to go out there and beat



Writing is one pastime that I enjoy thoroughly. Also, painting, sculpture, pottery, music, and drama take up a good deal of my time. I feel that all forms of creative expression can be relaxing and fun, if not overdone to the point of boredom. You should experience many forms of expression and not overwork one form until you are sure that it is the right thing for you. I feel very grateful and proud that you have accepted my short story "Winning" to be published in your magazine.

—Patrick J. O'Boyle/17/Sturgeon Bay, Wis.

kill someone. I've heard people say that right at the moment of impact adrenelin rushes into the heart and gives a person super human strength. That's about how I feel when I'm out there.

I look at my watch. I always wear my watch when I race. Sort of a good luck charm. I wear yellow socks too. The same pair every Sunday. It's only 12:30. The races don't start till 2:00. Now I have to kill time. I go back up to the track. People are sitting on blankets, drinking beer and eating lunch. I'm hungry but I know I can't eat. Maybe I should just go home. That feeling passes too. I see some kids I know and walk over to them.

They say, "How's it going?"

I say, "Super."

They say, "Good luck!"

I say, "Thanks, I'll need it."

Alone again. 1:15 P.M. Down

the equipment. I'm not the only one there though. Man and machine. Each rider has a certain ritual he performs. There is always one last important little screw to tighten or bolt to turn. Still there is something he feels he has forgotten. Something that will turn out to be decisive when the race is over. It's like going on a trip and when you're 50 miles from home; you're sure you're forgotten something important, but you're not quite sure what it is. That's where I should be now—50 miles from here.

Nonsense. If there's something I can do without now, it's stage fright. I don't want to be scared. To be scared is to be a chicken. To be a chicken is to be yellow. And I don't want to be scared!

Race time. About time. I feel like I've been through three years in the last three hours. The 100

and so I have to stay in the pits. I'll have time to watch later. The flag man is in his box and the bikes are on the line revving their engines. Down comes the flag. They're under way. I watch them let it out on the straightaway and down shift on the corners. I'm riding with them. Clutch—throttle—release—punch; all such automatic reactions.

It's over. The announcer is calling for the first heat of the 125's. I still have to wait. This heat I watch with great interest. I have to contend with the top three. Off they go on the five laps. Around and around. A friend of mine has the lead. I don't know the second and third place riders. It doesn't matter. They're good. The heat ends with the same three still leading. The final is going to be a beauty. But wait a minute. I'm not even in it yet. But I have

We're on the starting line. I lucked out and pulled the middle position. I like that best. The ends are usually rough and full of ruts and loose gravel. This way I get a good chance to pull ahead and then cut over to the inside. The flag is down and we're off. I keep saying to myself, "Hold it back, this is only the heat." But I can't. I know now that I'd ride hard and wide open if I were the only one on the track. I ride to win.

Yellow flag. One more lap to go. I'm in third place now. If I can hold it, I'm in the final. The ground is vibrating and the engine's roaring. Rounding the curve, I down shift. Then in what seems like all of a sudden another bike is beside me. He overtakes me on the backstretch. I push and push and pray and curse. Into the corner. He is still going

he is down and the bike on top of him. I see it in time. I can make it around him. Then I'll be sure to make the final. The other three riders are way behind. They don't have a chance of catching me. I tighten my grip. I'm home free. But what about the rider on the ground. He's hardly home free. Maybe he's hurt. Yeah, but there's the safety crew. But maybe he needs me now. I want to be in that final more than anything in the world. I could help him. But I've got to be in that final . . .

Driving home that night, I am riding the race over and over again. I know I *could* have won. Winning. That's what it's all about, or is it?

Photo by Don Rogers



THE CLASS RING

Ruby felt what may be called ultimate contentment. Lying face down in the sand, she could hear the sea gulls screeching above her, and the feel of the waves licking her toes added to the warm feeling that was her own. When Ruby rolled over, the gleam of the class ring struck her directly in the eyes. Why, not half an hour ago he had, in that charming way of his, ever so casually strolled up to her, handed her the ring, and said, "Keep this."

"Sure, Terry," she had replied with her brightest smile. Then he had, in that same charming way of his, strolled over to the bath house to don his swimming duds.

Personally, Ruby didn't care for swimming, so she had decided to simply soak up a tan. When she reached for the lunch box, the ring reflected the light of the sun

blinding force. As she bit into a sandwich from the lunch box she decided that this was the most beautiful class ring in the world. The gold was so lustrous it made you feel warm just to look at it. The blue setting, however, looked cool and fresh, adorned by the masculine-looking trimmings around it. Ruby turned her eyes to the turbulent ocean. Terry caught her eye and waved. Yes, indeed, this was a beautiful day. A sea gull suddenly swooped down and snatched the remainder of her sandwich. "Thief!" she called after it. Then laughing, she rolled over in the sand and hopped to her feet. Was there a name for the emotion she felt now? It was such a peaceful feeling: being so close to Terry, standing by like a goddess while he and some of his friends played "tag" in the water. It was a wonderful feeling of feel-

ing like a part of Nature: the



Writing has long been the most convenient way of conveying my thoughts. When I talk I may fumble around for words, but when I write I know exactly what I am going to say. One word describes how I felt when I wrote "The Class Ring": serene.

—Norine Andrews/16/Belmond, Ia.

sea gulls floating gracefully on the air and teasing her, the sand inviting her to play in it, the waves singing their eternal song, the breeze sifting through the trees in the woods behind the beach. Why did she feel this way? Was it sharing her day with the dearest person she knew, the beautiful weather, or could it be simply a figment of her imagination? She didn't know. How long would it be before he asked for the ring back? Ruby glanced down at the ring, sighed, and hoped it would be a while.

Terry and his friends had been in the water for some time now and they looked as if they were getting ready to come out. Ruby sighed heavily as the light of the sun was reflected in her eyes again by the ring. Then she saw Terry coming her way. Who was that following him? Oh, yes. She

Lisa. Lisa had the most gorgeous silky golden hair Ruby had ever seen. This only accented the devastating effect of her fascinating figure. Ruby knew Lisa tried to be nice to her, but she couldn't help not liking her very much.

Presently, Lisa was right on Terry's path. When they were about ten feet away, Terry gave Ruby a great big "Hi!" Lisa put on her very best smile, the very artificial kind that were the grounds for Ruby's dislike of Lisa. Then Terry came right up to Ruby and planted an emphatic kiss on her left cheek. He was so sweet. He held out his hand to her. Ruby smiled lovingly and dropped the beautiful class ring into his opened palm. Terry smiled and said, "Thanks for keeping this, Mom. I'd simply die if I lost it."

"Any time," Ruby returned with a widening smile. Then the three

with his arms around his two favorite girls: his widowed mother and his beloved fiancée.



HOW MANY LIVES?



I wanted so much to touch her, feel her hands, her cheeks; but I was almost afraid I would wake her from her peaceful sleep. But I knew Jackie wasn't sleeping; she was dead!

When the ambulance came, Mom told me to come with her into my own room. I didn't want to leave Jackie's room, for I knew when they took Jackie from the room she would never return. There would never again be those silly pillow fights we'd been having since we were small kids. And I would never be able to go in her room late at night after a date, when we would laugh together about the stupid things that had happened that night.

But when I looked at Mom and Dad, I felt like saying, "Jackie's only sleeping, she'll be up any minute now." I still couldn't believe she was gone forever. Poor

cry since Grandma died over five years ago. Mom was still so young, soft blonde hair at her shoulders, deep blue eyes; Jackie had blue eyes. Mom and Jackie were alike in a lot of ways. Except Mom was alive and . . .

Dad stared at Jackie's picture on my wall. His solid frame at this moment seemed to quiver. While his eyes glimmered sharply, his lips moved in what I think was a prayer.

After some short man from the ambulance told us that they had taken my sister, Dad told me that he and Mom should go to the funeral home to make all the arrangements. His heavy voice hurt me more than a thousand pins in my body ever could. I told Dad I would stay home and call Tim, Jackie's steady boyfriend, to let him know.

As I walked to the front door



Writing is expressing something which can't be said in words alone.
—Patricia Stoneman/16/Sturgeon Bay, Wis.

braced me and told me chokingly that she loved me.

When they had gone, I went back upstairs to my room. The police were still in Jackie's room, looking at her things, I guess.

A heavy unemotional voice carried through the wall, "She was only 17, wasn't she?"

After a short pause, a softer more gentle voice answered, "Yeah, only 17."

"Sleeping pills, huh?" asked the first, with a little less coldness.

"We found an empty bottle next to the bed."

The first voice threw in, almost a little too mechanically, "Well, you call the coroner." Then he asked with interest, "What did the note say?"

How could I bear to hear that note again? When I found Jackie, I had read the note. I was so shocked that I wondered if it were

Then when I felt Jackie's hand: hard and cold, I screamed out and pulled her body to me.

I asked myself for the hundredth time, "Why did it have to be this way?"

Suddenly a voice from Jackie's room destroyed my thoughts. Those words again. He was reading it aloud. "Mom, Dad and Jenny, I hate myself so much for having to leave this way. I'm not doing this because of anything you've done. Please tell Tim that it wasn't anything he did either. Tell him I'm sorry and that I love him. This is the only way I can leave you and be happy, because this way I know you'll be happier, without me. Since the day that I found out I was pregnant, I've hated myself so much because of the shame I've brought upon you. I know you used to be proud of me, and I guess I can't face know-

again. I've tried to put up with it all the last couple months and I know I've been unreasonable and hurt you in so many ways. But that'll all be over now. In doing this, I know I'm taking my baby's life. I would rather, though, that the baby never live to bear the shame I'd have brought upon it. Please forgive me for everything. I love you all."

One of the voices from Jackie's room questioned another without waiting for an answer, "Did you see her parents and her sister? From the looks of them, I'd say that girl took more lives with her than just hers and that baby's."

"Yes, I'd say you're right about that," the other voice agreed. My tears acknowledged my own agreement.

THE NUMBER AND THE FRACTION

Once upon a time in the mathematical universe of Algebra, there existed a number:

$\frac{1}{6}$

who was hopelessly in love with a fraction:

$\frac{1}{4}$

But, also, the fraction was continually messing with a decimal:

0.25

whom she claimed was mysterious and had an aura of mysticism around. "You're much too ordinary and just a plain number," she cried at him when he endeavored to show that he was something. "But look at the Decimal, he is completely different from you or me. You can turn yourself into a fraction and be just like me, but the Decimal simply can't do that." The number agreed and quietly counted himself away. Alas, if only both of them had known the truth. Such

7 9 3 13 27 29
- 1 3 3
111 31 344
3 33 11 24 25 44 47

"Why don't you settle down with one of those other numbers over there," his neighbors insisted.

"They're a little too odd, and besides, I don't approve of such unions," he replied. "A mixed number might result." After that his fellow numbers left.

"The trouble with me," he mused, "is the fact that no one can describe me. I'm a number, but what does that mean? Maybe if I learn to describe myself, she'll know that I am beautiful."

"I've got it," he cried. And he twisted and twisted and bent himself, and threw out another part of himself, and another, and finally came out with something that he knew described him:

And he discovered that he and all of the other numbers and fractions and complex fractions, real and unreal numbers and decimals, and behold, he came out with: $y = \text{real numbers}$

Fine, he thought, that is me, but what am I made up of? And again, he set himself for the pain that was to follow, that of tearing himself apart.

And he ripped,
And he tore,
And he split,

until at last with a great crash, he formed an equation:

$$X + Y = 6$$

As a result of this, he began to develop a more positive attitude about himself, and he delightedly began making all sorts of things to describe himself:

$$\begin{aligned} 2x + y + 2 &= 6 \quad \text{if } x = 4, y = -6 \quad \text{if } x = 2, y = 2 \\ 3x - y &= 6 \quad \text{if } x = 4, y = -6 \quad \text{if } x = 2, y = 2 \\ \frac{1}{2}x + \frac{3}{4}y &= 6 \quad \text{if } x = 4, y = -6 \quad \text{if } x = 2, y = 2 \\ 3x + 2y &= 6 \quad \text{if } x = 4, y = -6 \quad \text{if } x = 2, y = 2 \end{aligned}$$

The Number was so happy with himself that went off to tell the Fraction he loved that he could do something. "Ho-Hum," said the unimpressed Fraction, "I'll watch, but I don't in the least understand what you are doing."

"Come on, baby," giggled the Decimal. "He's no good. Watch me do this: .5555555555"

"Oh you silly little decimal," she gushed. "Let's go off so you can show me alone what you can do."

The Number watched them go away with tears in his eyes. So many tears came, in fact, that he almost erased himself. But he knew that he had the answer now, and what to do.

He returned once more to the equation:

$$\begin{aligned} 2x + y &= 6 \quad \text{if } x = 4, y = -6 \quad \text{if } x = 2, y = 2 \\ 3x - y &= 6 \quad \text{if } x = 4, y = -6 \quad \text{if } x = 2, y = 2 \\ \frac{1}{2}x + \frac{3}{4}y &= 6 \quad \text{if } x = 4, y = -6 \quad \text{if } x = 2, y = 2 \\ 3x + 2y &= 6 \quad \text{if } x = 4, y = -6 \quad \text{if } x = 2, y = 2 \end{aligned}$$

$$X + Y = 6$$

"Why," he suddenly exclaimed, "there's an unlimited amount of answers out of this." And he once again painfully twisted and wiggled and tore and scratched, and he found that he had discovered what mathematicians would call a relation or a set of ordered numbers.

$$\begin{aligned} (6, 0) \quad (5, 1) \quad (4, 2) \quad (3, 3) \quad (2, 4) \quad (1, 5) \\ (0, 6) \quad (-1, 7) \quad (1/2, 5 1/2) \quad (2 1/4, 3 3/4) \\ (1/100, 990/100) \text{ etc. etc. etc.} \end{aligned}$$

The number spent the rest of that day and night happily figuring out ways to express himself. And suddenly, a thought came to him. "I'm infinite," he said awestricken. "And that idiot decimal is limited, because he can't take apart parts of himself. But I've still got to tell other people what I am." And he thought, and came up with several ways of duplicating himself.

The most simple: $X = 6$

5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85 90 95 100

a little more complicated, but still simple $X = 6$

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

slightly less simple:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

more complicated: $X + Y = 6$



and finally an even more complicated fraction than the Fraction was herself:

$$x^2 - y^2 + 2xy - 6$$

$$3y^2 + xy - 12$$

The Number was delighted with himself and thought that surely this would impress the Fraction

went off to find his enemy "The Decimal," and the Fraction for whom he had extremely passionate love.

After wandering through several mathematical sets and universes, he finally found them together. The Fraction, as usual, was gushing over the ability of the Decimal to endlessly duplicate himself. "Oh, are you back again," the Fraction moaned. "Oh, very well, I shall listen to whatever you can do." Whereupon the Number started to show off his immeasurably great qualities.

He showed that: he was complex,

$$x^2 + 5x = 6$$

but also basically simple at heart:

$$x^2 + 4x = 6$$

$$x^2 + 5x - 6 = 0$$

$$(x + 1)(x - 6) = 0$$

$$x = 1, -6$$



One of the most tiresome things in most mathematical textbooks is the completely dull way in which they present their lesson. This consists of simply giving out facts, and maybe a couple of exercises. Then, in class, one goes over the homework and into the next lesson. I wrote "The Number and the Fraction" to show that there are better ways of presenting an idea than simply giving out facts.

—Steve Jacobs/16/Kent, O.

that he was versatile.

mysterious: (1, 2, 3 to infinity) and prac

A person is going to open a Dump on Monday and all he has is 25 coins whose total value is \$4.30. How many dimes and how many quarters does he have?

$$10n + 25(25 - n) = \$4.30$$

$$10n + 625 - 25n = \$4.30$$

$$-15n = \$1.95$$

$$n = 13 \quad 25 - n = 12$$

$$n = \text{dimes}$$

25 - n = quarters

After showing his amazing talent to the now overwhelmed fraction, he convinced himself in to the Dacia.

mal, and demanded, "Simplify yourself." Shaken by the mighty on-slaught of the furious fraction, he became less complex

$$.5 = 5/10$$

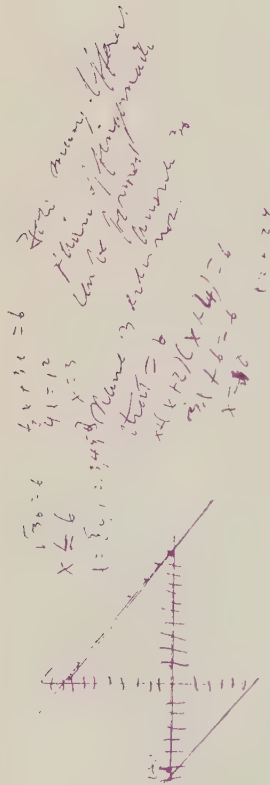
and less complex, until he equaled the Fraction

$$5/10 = 1/2$$

"Well," she demanded, "have you anything to say for yourself?"

"My love," he whined, "please forgive me and accept me."

"Mfff," she contemptuously sniffed, and went over to join the proud Number. And together they lived mathematically happily ever after.





to by Ed Eckstein

EXPERIENCE WAS MY BEST TEACHER BY BARBARA PRINCE

■ In September, 1969, I became involved in a new type of education. I call it "experience." Instead of entering college as planned, I entered a hospital—not as a student nurse, but as a patient. Through a chest x-ray for college it was discovered that I required open-heart surgery to live a full life. This was quite a shock to myself and my family since I had never shown any symptoms of a heart defect. My senior year in high school was an especially active period of my life. Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined I had a major physical defect.

I entered the hospital on Sept. 22, afraid and lonely in a strange city—Philadelphia. The only people I knew were my parents. I had never felt closer to them than at that time.

My operation was scheduled for Sept. 25 because three days were

needed for tests—electrocardiograms, x-rays, and many blood tests. Between the routine examinations, I busied myself with meeting fellow patients. Fortunately, I had little time to worry about the coming event.

The night before the operation was a nightmare. After my parents left, I couldn't force myself to talk to anyone. My sole comfort came in crying and asking "Why me?" I had been trying to be brave for so long. Few friends knew how scared I actually was. Although I feared death, I tried to believe that I was meant to live through this experience.

I had read of the lack of donors for organ transplants and decided that if anything should happen to me, I should help someone else. I was looking for paper to write my parents a note about my decision when the phone rang.

open-heart surgery many years before called long distance just to say "Keep the faith, baby." She explained that the night before the operation is usually the worst night of the ordeal. "But remember," she continued, "you can't do it alone, the doctor can't do it alone, and God can't do it alone. The three of you must work together. All you can do now is hope and pray, the rest is out of your hands."

I was stunned that a woman I hardly knew cared enough to call me and comfort me. If brotherly love such as this existed, surely God's love would allow me to live longer than just tomorrow.

I never wrote the letter to my parents because I spent the rest of the night in solemn meditation, relying on blind faith. Although I've often had doubts of God's existence, I knew that someone out there was listening.

The next morning I was awakened at six a.m. to get ready for the operation. I said a prayer as I was wheeled on a stretcher to the operating room. When I arrived at the scene, I suddenly became frightened. There were so many people and so many machines that I felt bewildered, to say the least. Immediately, everyone turned their attention to me and began performing their specific duties. Some doctors put intravenous tubes in my hands and others connected me to machines while the medical students observed all the action. As the doctors worked, they talked and joked with me. Donna, my private duty nurse, stood by me constantly and answered questions about what was happening. I had trouble recognizing the doctors and nurses, because their masks covered all facial features except the eyes. It turned out to be a game when

the doctors wouldn't tell me who they were until I guessed correctly. Then someone said "Now we will put you to sleep."

Seven hours later, I woke up in the intensive care unit (ICU). I don't remember asking my father when the operation would start. Or telling my mother to stop crying. Or even that they were there. Later they told me about that first visit.

The day after the operation the nurses dragged me out of bed. First they had to move all the machines to one side so the tubes stuck in my body wouldn't get tangled. It was like calisthenics trying to move. I was stiff and ached all over. Nearly collapsing with every step, I finally reached the nearby chair and sank into it. I vowed not to move unless someone carried me back to bed. Then a nurse helped me walk the three

After two days in the ICU, it was quite a relief to be moved to a semi-private room. Now I could get the rest and relaxation I needed. I was unable to sleep in the ICU because the bright lights were on constantly and nurses were always rushing from one patient to another. Even the sleeping pills and morphine shots didn't help me there.

On Oct. 8, two weeks minus one day after the operation, I was permitted to go home. Since that day, I've come far on the road to recovery. I even went to one of my alma mater's football games—even though I couldn't play on the team this year. (That's a joke!) Besides, I have a whole new team now—my family, my friends, and the staff of Jefferson Medical College Hospital. Without their team effort, I don't think I could have made it this far.



In August, 1969, I discovered that I required open-heart surgery. By coincidence, the week before I entered the hospital, I met an older woman who underwent a similar heart operation many years ago. She advised me to keep a diary while I was in the hospital so that someday I could write a story about my experience and perhaps help others to have courage. The woman was a newspaper editor who later published my story in the local paper. And now, perhaps I will reach a teenage heart patient going through the same tears, hopes, and shattered dreams I experienced and be able to help that person. ("Experience Was My Best Teacher.")
—Barbara Prince/18/Northampton, Pa.

atrial septal defect—which means I had a hole in the wall separating the right and left auricles. As a result, too much blood went to my lungs and not enough oxygenated blood reached my body tissues. Because the heart is a muscle, it became enlarged from over-use. The lack of oxygenated blood caused me to be short and thin. In some cases a person may be severely handicapped.

I was lucky that my heart started beating again. For a while I was on a heart-lung machine. My own heart did not pulsate for a full half-hour! There was a time when that would have meant I was legally dead.

I guess you could say I've been reborn. I actually feel like I'm starting a new life. Although I had to postpone my college education for a year, I believe that I have learned more from this experience than any college course

could have taught me. I realize now that no challenge will ever be too great. My will to live was so strong, that I suffered much pain and discomfort for a second chance. It took a lot of strength that I didn't know I had—until I needed it!

Because of the advances in heart surgery in recent years, it is now possible to correct, partially or completely, many heart defects. Not every person with a defective heart can benefit from an operation and some malformations are still inoperable. Much more research must be done on heart disease, but much money is needed for this research. So I intend to support the HEART FUND campaign this year and every year. How about you? Who knows, someday it may help you! By the way, when was the last time you had a chest x-ray?



GH SCHOOL GENESIS BY GARY JONES

- 1 In the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and fifty-eight, the student began the pursuit of knowledge.
- 2 And the mind of the child was without form, and void; and innocence was upon the face of the child. And The Teacher began His work upon the mind of the child.
- 3 And The Teacher said, "Look, look. See Spot run." And the student said, "Look, look. See Spot run."
- 4 And The Teacher heard the child, that it was good: and The Teacher said that He was taking the child from the path of ignorance.
- 5 And The Teacher presented His teachings as being sacred and all other ideologies as being Communistic. And the winter and the spring were the First Grade.
- 6 And The Teacher said, "Let ▶

of the children, and let it divide the children from the children."

7 And The Teacher made the firmament, and divided the children which were under the firmament from those which were above the firmament; and it was so.

8 And The Teacher called the firmament the sacred "A"; and made it to be above all else. And the winter and the spring were Junior High.

9 And The Teacher said, "Let Us bring these children to yet another place and teach them 'Knowledge and Understanding:'" and it was so.

10 And The Teacher called this place High School and the gathering together of these children called He "meaningful and relevant" courses of instruction; and The Teacher saw that it was good.

11 And The Teacher said, "Let Us educate the students with many

many years of other practical trivia."

12 And the students were educated with many years of grammar and also with many years of other practical trivia; and The Teacher saw that it was good.

13 And the winter and the spring were The Senior Year.

14 And so The Teacher had created the student in His own image, in the image of The Teacher created He him: male and female created He them.

15 And The Teacher indoctrinated them, and The Teacher said unto them, "Take this knowledge, use it and understand it."

16 And The Teacher said, "Behold, I have given you knowledge, which is upon the face of the earth, and understanding, in which is the fruit of knowledge; to you it shall be worthwhile."

17 And The Teacher saw something that He had made,



As the end of my senior year in high school drew near, I began to reflect on my experiences of the past 12 years. I realized how ill-prepared I was to cope with the problems of the future unless I received further education, which many of those with whom I was acquainted were unable to do. In disgust, I began to write and was able to express at least a few of my feelings on the educational system as it exists today. Hopefully, these deficiencies will soon be corrected. ("High School Genesis")
—Gary Jones/18/Albuquerque, N.M.

and, behold, it was very good (to Him). And the evening and the morning were Graduation.

18 But at last the student saw that he had been shaped, and molded, and, behold, it was *not* good.

19 And the student saw that he had worshipped and cheated and sacrificed for the sacred "A" and it was all waste.

20 And he had taken The Teacher's knowledge and understood the order and tense of every noun, predicate and adjective; and it was all waste.

21 And the student saw that he had served no purpose and all his many efforts had been in vain, and he knew not what to do: and it was *not* good.

22 And the student rebelled and The Teacher understood not his rebellion: and it was *not* good.

23 And the evening and the

Photo by Lana Reeves (Bethel)



POLLUTION

The day began like any other day. I heard on the radio that the sun arose at 6:18 a.m. but I couldn't be certain as the sky is usually very hazy. Upon stepping outdoors I observed a faint pinkish cast in the sky. Obviously the slight westward wind had carried the delicate hue from Gary, Indiana, to our suburban town of Elmhurst. As I had nothing to do, I decided to go for a walk. Up and down the street white puffs of smoke were escaping from waiting automobiles ready to transport their owners to catch the 8:15 commuter. I saw my neighbor dash out of his house and hurriedly flick the remainder of his toast onto the ground. "Some lucky animal will surely have a nice treat," I thought to myself. It was almost simultaneously that the waiting cars pounced into action and took off

passing cloud of dust and smoke.

I continued my walk, being very careful to avoid stepping in the large puddles which had formed during last night's rain. There was a great amount of water in the streets as many sewers were backed up or clogged with leaves. A few children were already busily playing in the puddles. An absurd idea that I had heard some time ago suddenly occurred to me. The idea was to separate the country's sanitary and storm sewers. It is apparent that the person who suggested this had not considered the excessive amount of money involved in such a wasteful project. Besides, I heard that simply a shot of chlorine will clear polluted water of any undesired bacteria.

As I turned a corner onto another street, the ensuing sight caused a swell of pride within me. Lined up along the curbs were



Although I wrote this paper titled "Pollution" as an assignment for my English class, I feel it's necessary to devote much more attention to this area concerning our health and environment.

—Mary Lynn Everson/17/Elmhurst, Ill.

it was garbage day on Rose Lane. I have always admired the intricate system of garbage collection and disposal, for I know that the people at the Sanitary District never run out of places to put the garbage. I get quite dis-custled when I hear people criticizing this wonderful system and I usually dismiss their talk as just a lot of garbage.

After walking a short distance, I came to the banks of Salt Creek, where I decided to rest awhile. I am very thankful that there is a place close at hand where one can feel close to nature. I feel very content just to breathe the air, which is distinguishably pleasant, and to watch the water slowly drift by. It pleased me to hear that the dirty, slimy fish are no longer able to exist in the water.

Much time, spent in quiet contemplation, must have elapsed be-

unpleasant. Piled by a tree on one side of the creek was an assortment of empty cans and wrappers. It annoyed me to see such carelessness. I did my good deed for the day by picking up every piece of garbage and throwing it in the creek to be washed downstream.

Upon completing that task, I felt the urge for a cigarette. Seeing that I had none and wasn't in the mood to "walk a mile," I caught the nearest bus going uptown. Since nearly everyone on the bus was smoking, I tried to partially satisfy my urge by breathing the smoky air. I caught a whiff of that "country fresh" smell from the man sitting next to me and I asked him if I could have one of his cigarettes. He merely grunted at me and began a coughing spell. Apparently he choked on his words.

town, I got off and ran to the drugstore. Since the air was very heavy, I was struggling for breath as I bought my carton of cigarettes. I walked contentedly back to the bus thinking of all the marvelous things I had seen that day. It made me happy to think about the wonderful world I live in, free of cares and worries.

The bus dropped me off at my street just as the rush of 5:15 commuters was returning home. Again, after the momentary blast of speeding automobiles, all that remained was a passing cloud of exhaust fumes. I paused for a few minutes on my doorstep reflecting on the beauty of the sunset. The usual grey smog of Chicago mingled with the pink smog of Gary to form a colorful shield around the sinking sun. It almost made me cry to watch it.

RAINS

When I woke up this morning I realized it had been raining heavily. I made up my mind I would not go to school today.

As a matter of fact it had been raining for 39 days and 39 nights. For the last few days it had been raining harder than ever before. This hadn't seemed out of the ordinary, because the weather girl gave daily reports on how it would clear up the next day or so. I accepted this and went on with my usual life.

I looked out the window and saw the sheets of water flowing evenly down the street to the corner where they met with the water of other streets and with the water bubbling up from the clogged sewers, and continued flowing steadily to the bay. But, it only got half way to where the bay used to be, because during the night, the bay had risen quite



RAINS BY JIM MAXWELL

whole world was steadily filling up. The sun never shone through the clouds. They were so thick that it was fairly dark all day long.

In view of this, the President had recently been giving reassuring speeches on the power of democracy to overcome such small obstacles as bad weather. The Pope had issued statements—statements meant to be reassuring, but not so reassuring to many—that the Lord would look after those who put their faith in Him. The Pentecostals were all retreating to various mountain tops to pray fanatically. The hippies were dancing in the mud. The yuppies were waging war on the White House, blaming everything on fascist-bureaucracy of the government. The John Birchers were blaming it all on the Communists.

I got up and told my mother I didn't feel well and she promised

When she had left for work and my brother had left for school, I found a hammer and a few nails in the garage; waded slowly across the street to where a brand new \$50,000 luxurious, five bedroom, three baths, two-car garage, all electric kitchen home was being built; proceeded to build a small boat from the scraps the workmen let me have; then ran home to get my white dove, which happened to be trained to fetch olive branches; and set sail for the place I'd heard so much about in a book my Sunday school teacher used to read to me.



"I'll never write anything that hasn't been said before and probably better, but if it gives me or any one else a little satisfaction it's worth the repetition."

—Jim Maxwell/18/Redwood City, Calif.



X The first snow hit us today, or rather, I should say, hit me. I never saw it fall, only became aware of it when my hands were red and nearly frostbitten, when my back had become part of a drift, so long had I been kneeling there, trying to get the bow just right. I should have noticed it though because the strings were so slippery but I put it off as condensation from the clouds of my breath.

I must have been in bad shape when she found me there becoming one with a snow bank, losing my identity. She had just come from the shack; her hands were warm. She touched my chin from behind, turned it towards her and I felt the warmth of her breath as she whispered a plan of waiting until spring to fly our kites.

valleys on the window sill. All of this was observed from a synthetic rug near the fireplace. To either sides there were small piles of materials for kite building with my partially completed kite in the pile on the right. The paper was drying off, crinkling as it did while the half-bowed cross brace slowly straightened itself against the strings I had never tightened.

As I fell asleep, I listened to her but I could see her looking longingly at the things that would someday fly.

VIII I awoke with fragments of what I thought were dreams in my head. I thought that there had been a gust of cold wind that had been responsible for my waking. But the door was closed when I looked up and I reasoned that it had been my imagination.

IX From inside we watched the

I rolled over to see her, then

only to fall. Seeing that I was awake, she came to feel my head and find that I had a fever. She reached deep into her pocket and pulled out a Hershey bar. My vision began to fade—I was sinking back into my sleep. She thrust a square of the chocolate into my mouth before I lost consciousness. I found the chocolate cold, as if it had been outside in the snow.

VII Chocolate bars and strawberry milk. My health slowly improved. Eventually, I could move around the shack and look out the window. The window, the only one that wasn't boarded, faced west and we would watch the December sun as it landed on a drift and fell in like a shining salt block on an iceberg.

VI I still slept away most of my time and though she would lie

she would be up, doing "nothing" she would say. Occasionally there would be a blast of cold air in my sleep or puddles of water near the door when I awoke but the chocolate was never cold again.

I noticed too that the pile of kite building materials seemed rearranged from time to time. This I never mentioned, just as with the cold and the water.

V No matter how I felt I made it a point of joining her in watching the sun set. We would lean our heads together so both of us could see through the small portal.

Each night the sun would go through his death throes on the frozen wasteland. Even when the old snow whipped at the window or when a light choking lace of fresh mana for snow men obscured the act, we would watch, following the script from memory. As I

always say that that was a hell of a way to die, alone on a frosted piece of land the Indians wanted. And then we would hold one another closely.

IV "How do you know it has glass?" I asked.

She calmed me with the same "I know" that had calmed me so many times in the past. It meant I know/Don't worry/You have to trust/Please Baby. I gave in as usual—as always come to think of it.

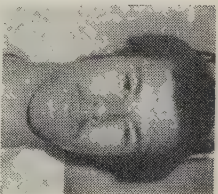
I took up the hammer and began pulling nails out of the boards that covered the windows opposite to the open one. I was slightly amazed that I was strong enough to do it for her.

When the last board fell, a full flow of sunlight flushed through the glass and bathed her. She was beautiful—after all it had been her idea from the beginning.

"What does it mean?" I asked. And she said that there were winter-fliers who flew their kites in this season at the horizon. Now her arms were outstretched where before they had been wrapped tightly around herself. I realized that she was thinking about flying.

III When morning came, I found her seated beside me, waiting for my waking. I cleared my eyes and raised myself on my knees to look slightly downward into her eyes. She spoke first. She talked of rising before dawn then standing before the eastern window in anticipation. There were glinting objects in the sky, near where the horizon must have been, that flickered on and off while dancing in the sky. As the sun showed signs of rising two things happened, the individual dancers became less distinct, less brilliant in relation to their background—and their numbers increased until they appeared to be some kind of gnat swarm from warmer seasons. Then, when the sun came fully into view, they all fell from the sky and she had not seen them since. As she related this to me her eyes had been to

II That night she did not join me at the window as usual, rather she stood behind and I believe she watched the sun sink over the horizon of my shoulder. I had an idea of what was coming. She had arranged a pile of kite materials into a neatly tied package by the door. When I turned around, having looked for some time at the place where the sun had silently set, she had a bowl of something. I had expected chocolate and strawberries but she said it was warmed snow and winterberries—a "sort of vaccination



I really don't have a blanket statement that covers the purposes of creative expression. Sometimes I think it comes from a need to communicate or serves as an excuse for communication in a society accustomed to silence. It could be some vestigial form of egotism or masochism. Then, perhaps, it is something much closer to growth or breathing. I tend to favor the last idea in combination with the first two as I write this which says nothing of tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. All that I am sure of is that we need to express ourselves now as never before if we are to survive either in spirit or in body.

—W. Kim Heron/16/Detroit, Mich.

said I was perfectly healthy and she said "I know/I care/I love/You have to trust/Please Baby." I thanked her for knowing and finished even the last drop, despite its taste. I thanked her again for everything: coming, staying, everything. I didn't ask where she was going, remembering a slick mass-media, T.V. lawyer who once said never ask a question when you already know the answer. She rose for her coat and I went to get her package. We met at the door.

I "No tears," she said.

"No fears," I said.

"Good-bye," she said.

"I know," I said.

Enshrouded by her coat, clutching her package, she walked to the east.
Afterward:

walked off. I think she said "Watch for me in the morning," but I couldn't really tell for the winds. In the mornings I rise early to watch the kites that flash a while before and after the sun and wonder about the lives that they lead—the flyers I mean. There is one that seems always to stand out because of its sure movements and because it is always the last to go down. I tend to think I know the person pulling the lines below that kite.

As for me—my health has returned and my head is clearing. There are four windows open here now. I can see to the north and south now also. And I'm building a kite now. I never realized until after that she had already fixed the bow on my kite for me before leaving. She knows I've always had trouble getting the bow right. However, I'm not just putting together a kite as I would have be-

fore. I'm trying a new design and I'm taking my time and I slowly ponder and evaluate the merits of travelling different directions. I see evidence of others only when I look east but perhaps past the horizon in one of the other directions . . . I can't wait for spring.

Before I leave, I intend to board up all of the windows except the one that was originally open, the western one. Perhaps this place can be of use to others in the same way as it was to us.

Photo by Ed Wallowitch



I carried my bags down the wooden steps onto the dirt road which led to the flagpole. I sighed deeply as the weight of them slowed me down. Each second was precious since this would be our last hour together.

After finally reaching the pavement, I lifted my head to find you standing there—smiling. "The last time" entered my mind as I tried to hide my tears.

Placing my bags down and picking up my guitar, we began to walk away from the crowd—the laughing and the crying, the hellos' and goodbyes'. Suddenly, the happy moments of the past week were clouded by my sadness of leaving, and returning back to the everyday routine of life. If only we could stay here forever—together as one.

We walked down a small hill away from everyone, and sat on the grass still dawning from the

morning dew. I took out my guitar and started singing, "All my bags are packed, I'm ready to go..." I couldn't turn my head to look at you. I was too afraid that your eyes would meet mine and that I would have to stop to feel your warm touch. I just stared endlessly into the tall, dark pines and pictured your face before me.

Upon finishing the song, we both realized that it was soon time for you to leave since your father had arrived. I put my guitar in its case and started up the hill after you.

The last hour was fast fleeting and the time was drawing near when we must separate and go on our own ways. You came up to me and said that you must go put your luggage in the car.

These minutes washed away like waves on a beach.

When you returned, we decided to go up the Hill—Vesper

Hill—for the final time together. It seemed to call us there as we started the climb up. Half-way, we turned off the path and sat in the un-mowed grass. Again, I couldn't bear to look at you—afraid that I would see in your eyes the reflections of the love we knew for only a week. Why couldn't it have been longer?

I gazed across the top of the forest and looked at the mountains in the distance. All I could see was your face; the face I knew and came to love so deeply.

At the bottom of the Hill stood your mother, motioning to you that it was time for you to go. "The last time" echoed again in my mind.

On descending the Hill, I took your hand, only wishing that the bottom could not be seen; but it could.

Our final moment—together—alone—had crept up on us. As

you turned and faced me, we kissed; our first and final kiss. This would be the last time we would feel each others' embrace. Why must life be like this?

We walked out into the crowd, only this time we were part of that crowd. We were no longer laughing or saying hi, but crying and saying goodbye.

Suddenly, it all ended. You drove away. I didn't want to watch the car turning onto the main road, but I did. I wanted to run after you, just to feel your arms around me again, but . . .

I wanted to spend the rest of the time I had, alone; away from everyone else. I wanted to go back to the places of our happiness and try to re-live them, only knowing it was impossible without you.

There was suddenly nowhere to walk. I turned and faced the camp

memories and I knew if I entered them I wouldn't be able to leave. There wasn't a trace of you—except—except the letter you gave me before you left. How could I have forgotten that? I ran to it as if I were running to you.

Now, at the recall of that letter, I somehow wish I were back there reading it for the first time. But since I am not, just the remembrance of our delayed kiss and incomplete embrace bring tears to my eyes—just as that letter did then.



"Our Last Hour" is my first experiment with prose writing. It came about last summer after returning from a conference in New Hampshire. The week was filled with encounters and activities that formed meaningful relationships between counsellors and campers. I felt that I had to make this experience concrete in some way, so I wrote the story.

—Priscilla Berglind/17/Concord, Mass.

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6	NUMBER 42 by Bette L. Wickman
9	THE MISTAKE by Mary Norton
14	NUMBER SIX by Jeannette Horth
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18	CITRICLY SPEAKING OR WORLD SOLUTION NO. 2 by Jackie Hampton
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